

Point Three



The Toc H magazine
March 1981 10p



CARING ABOUT PEOPLE

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Point Three

Editor: Frank Rice MA MA FBIM
Designer: Sybil A Chick

Letters and articles are welcomed and should be addressed to the Toc H Editorial Office, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Bucks HP22 6BT (Telephone: 0296 623911). Opinions expressed (including the editorial) are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the Toc H Movement.

Point Three is available from the Toc H Publications Department, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Bucks HP22 6BT. (Telephone: 0296 623911). Single copies 10p. Annual subscription: £1.20 including postage.

The cover picture is of Wilma Anic our Print Room Supervisor for the past three years. Wilma leaves us on 6 February to resume her career in physio-therapy. We plan to publish in our next issue an account of her experience as a handicapped person.

Photo: Scott Shaw



Toc H seeks to create friendship and understanding among people of all backgrounds and beliefs. Local group activities range from holidays for the handicapped and children's playschemes to arts festivals and even bird watching. Toc H is short for Talbot House – the soldiers' club in Belgium founded by the Reverend 'Tubby' Clayton in 1915. Today Toc H provides opportunities for people to test the relevance of practical Christianity and we welcome anyone who would like to give us a try.

Members accept a four fold commitment:

1. To build friendships across the barriers that divide man from man.
2. To give personal service.
3. To find their own convictions while always being willing to listen to the views of others.
4. To work for the Kingdom of God.

This magazine, which acts as a forum for ideas about Toc H and about the world in which we live, takes its title from the third of these Four Points – to think fairly.

From the Editor

LEFT, RIGHT AND CENTRE

Writing of the British nation, Voltaire once spoke of *Froth at top, dregs at bottom, but the middle excellent*. I think he was right. I have never understood why so many of us sneer at the middle course. Common sense would seem to suggest that it's probably the best course to steer by; yet the phrase is most often used by us as a term of abuse. I was at a Toc H meeting not long ago when the speaker – a member of long standing – said accusingly that our Movement looked *middle aged, middle class and middle of the road*. The audience laughed uncomfortably, agreeing both with the statement and the implied *disparagement*. Yet 'middle age' can be the prime of life, combining experience with energy and enthusiasm; the 'middle class' includes most of our fellow citizens, in fact or in ambition, and historically has been responsible for most radical reform; and 'middle of the road' suggests avoiding extremism. If we don't want all this, then what do we want?

Well, you can see one political alternative to moderation at any meeting of the National Front. Inspired by what someone called *the wisdom of the street corner*, their speakers have a strong grasp of modern mob oratory, combining loud and offensive slogans designed to appeal to the unthinking with coarse slanders of prominent people. Their whole technique has been summed up as *provocation within the law* – and sometimes they're not too careful about staying within the law. The only thing that distinguishes them from the young Nazis of the 1930s is their tiny number – itself a tribute to the middle course attitudes of most British people. And they are nicely matched by the lead elements in their noisiest opponents: they, too, live on wild slogans, slanders and violence. As Dean Inge once put it: *The enemies of Freedom do not argue: they shout and they shoot*. And, you know, there's surprisingly little difference between the two extremes. The most violent of their members can swing quite easily from one side to the other because it's the violence, the fanaticism, the extremism that counts. Communists can quickly become Fascists, and vice versa. *If the clergyman's daughter drinks nothing but water, she's certain to finish on gin*.

It happens that I am writing these notes just after the conference held at Wembley in late January to settle a new method of selecting leaders of the Labour Party – a political federation with a long and honourable record and a fine Christian ancestry. Some of the party's most impressive members, like Mrs Shirley Williams, appear to have decided that relatively small numbers of extremists are succeeding in taking control of both party and leadership and that they cannot put up with it any longer. Mrs Williams – perhaps a bit late in the day – has spoken of what she believed to be happening as *extremely dangerous and extremely frightening*. The air is full of talk of 'splits' and 'gangs of three' and the word 'democracy' is freely thrown around by all sides – sometime by men who, if they see themselves as 'democrats', must have their own private definition of the word. Whether or not you agree with Mrs Williams or David Owen – and I often don't – at least they are trying to avoid extremism, struggling to steer a middle course and finding (surprise, surprise!) that that is what most of us want. We've just had a couple of opinion polls to test how many voters would support such a middle course – one which drew ideas (and people) from the right of the Labour Party, from the Liberals and from the left of the Conservative Party. The polls revealed that if such a group, with such policies, existed now and a general election were held now, it could sweep the board.

Of course, I am not pretending that majorities always have the truth: certainly they have no prescriptive right to coerce minorities. I am far from mocking enthusiasm or vigour or radicalism or the powerful expression of unpopular views. What I would claim, though, is that most lasting radical change has been brought about by middle aged, middle class people who abhor extremism. I would add that most of the harm in the modern world has come and is coming from men who shy away from the middle of the road to one extreme or the other and then want to force us all to join them. You can have enthusiasm without fanaticism and real reform without unreason or violence. One of Jung's wisest sayings was: *Every form of addiction is bad no matter whether the narcotic be alcohol or morphine or idealism*.

What do you think?



Eastbourne Women's Branch have adopted the patients of Chichester Ward of the Princess Alice Hospital (which incorporates the former Downside

Geriatric Hospital). There were plenty of smiles when the Branch took along their Christmas gifts.

Wanted!

A vacancy will be occurring on the HQ staff at Wendover shortly which may well suit a man or woman with some executive and financial experience who is retiring early.

The general areas of responsibility will be:

Secretary to the CEC's Properties Committee

General responsibility for Toc H properties in consultation with our professional adviser

Handling (with our solicitors) all legal aspects of Toc H property

Dealing with all Toc H insurance matters

He or she will be required to attend all meetings of the Properties Committee and all meetings of Mark Management Committees.

He or she will be based at Wendover and should be available from 1 May 1981.

Salary to be negotiated.

All enquiries, please to: The General Secretary, Toc H, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 6BT.

Christmas Time at Leigh

by Geoff Armstrong

The Christmas festivities got under weigh at Leigh when we held our annual Christmas 'Fayre' with all the usual stalls and games and to the delight of all the children a visit from Father Christmas.

Next on our December calendar was the Luncheon Club's Christmas lunch when our ladies in the kitchen provided an excellent meal for some 40 senior citizens. We trust the Luncheon Club can look forward to another successful 12 months.

December 15 brought our annual PHAB Club Christmas party and trophy presentation night. We were pleased to welcome Leigh Rugby League Football Club Captain John Woods and player Ray Tabern who presented the trophies to the eight winners and runner up in the Senior and Junior Pool and Table Tennis Competitions. The rest of the evening was taken up with dancing and some hilarious games, at the end of which I observed a team of very happy but shattered helpers who all agreed that we had had a very successful night.

On 17 December we held our party for all

types of handicapped and underprivileged children. Again, as at all parties, plenty of food, games and dancing was the order of the day, plus a visit from 'Santa'. We were extremely pleased to welcome 12 of our 16-17 year old members from the PHAB youth club who turned up to assist with whatever task they could and I would like to express thanks to 'Ben' for his endless patience and 'puff' in blowing up an endless supply of balloon animals.

The afternoon of 24 December saw our annual visit to Belle Vue Circus. We went, as did hundreds of others, as guests of the Manchester Evening News. Our party was made up of children in care and some of our adult friends from Woodview Home. Boarding our trusty ambulance, armed with chocolate, crisps, toffee lollipops, balloons and blowers we set off for Belle Vue and enjoyed a first class circus. The usual little bit of excitement came when we had our after the interval count up. 'Where's David?' 'Don't know, I thought he was with your group!' Picture the scene - Kings Hall, Belle Vue, packed with children and adults; no David; orders issued that all party stay in their seats or else; Albert explored

outside foyer, Brian and myself snack bar and toilet; no David; Brian off to the right, myself to the left around the Hall. About 50 yards away I saw, to my relief, David, tub of ice cream in one hand, spoon in the other and a grin from ear to ear. All together again, we watched the remainder of the circus and enjoyed a pleasant, if not rowdy ride home.

Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve dances were held and once again went off well.

Before concluding this article I must mention our junior choir consisting of 11 girls aged 6 - 12 who, under the direction of Hilda, rehearsed very hard for several weeks at carols traditional and new and presented concerts for the senior citizens in 'Brookdale' sheltered accommodation and also at our Centre, bringing a great deal of joy.

In conclusion I would like to thank all the Leigh Branch members and friends for all their efforts, not only over the Christmas festivities, but throughout 1980 and hope that 1981 will be as good if not better. To all our friends in Toc H a Happy New Year.

In Brief...

● Cleveland District Branch are keeping busy. Their Chairman has written to tell us some of their activities during the last quarter of 1980. These included a coffee evening in her home which raised over £80 and a Christmas 'Fayre' that brought £135 into Branch funds. In December they held their third annual Carol Service in All Saints Church, Middlesbrough with readings by Branch members, a collection (donated to the local Church Army Hostel) and a 'get together' which included the families of Branch members and friends from all over Cleveland.

● Bakewell (Derbyshire) Joint Branch shared recently in a happy ceremony. The occasion was a supper party to mark the conversion of some huts into The Medway Centre — a community and education centre for the Town. Toc H members and Centre users present paid tribute to those volunteers who had helped in the work but could not be present. Those who were there expressed their appreciation of the splendid catering by Judith and Roger Green of Greenapple, Youlgreave.

● Broads District (Norfolk) held a successful festival at Gorleston mainly to say thank you to local people who help Toc H in any way. A Thanksgiving Service was conducted by the Vicar, Revd Colin Cooper, assisted by Toc H Padres Revd Paul Atkins, Revd Richard Dommett and Revd Maurice Cuttall. The sermon was given by Revd Crispin White. Readings were given by members of Broads District Executive and by Linda Brown representing the handicapped from the monthly disco run by Toc H at the Ferryside Centre. After the service over 100 members gathered in the Chapter House for a buffet and Broads District Chairman Jack Ditcham introduced music and comedy from Betty White and Len Elphick. There was also a

tape/slide show of Toc H work in residential homes throughout the country and 'Norwich Harmony', a group of 21 ladies gave a superb performance of unaccompanied singing 'barber shop' style. The Director, Ken Prideaux-Brune talked of 'The Way Forward' and said there was still much we can achieve through love and fellowship. During the Ceremony of Light all the Branch Lamps were lighted simultaneously. Homegoing prayers were led by Len Elphick. The event proved a typical Toc H meeting conducted in a spirit of fellowship and high hearted happiness.

● Newport (Gwent) has a men's Branch and a women's Branch which share a joint meeting once a month and do a great deal of work together. They visit two hospitals and a Cheshire Home regularly, befriending patients and residents. In the summer, they combine to run weekly outings for the old and handicapped and in winter give fortnightly parties for them. They run a regular Saturday bookstall in Newport's market, raising in this way around £1,000 each year. This year their Christmas Bazaar — their main single fund raising effort — brought in nearly £600. They provide items of special equipment for individuals, homes or hospitals as the need is seen. And so on! This is a record to be proud of, though Newport, far from boasting of what they do, say that it is just regular Toc H service such as is carried out by Branches right across the country.

● Brighton's Evening Argus reports an unusual story. Harold Davis, age 86, a founder member of Brighton's Toc H Club for the Blind, who went to Australia 25 years ago, wrote to the paper recently enclosing a cheque for £25. He founded the club just 50 years ago and wants the money used for a members' party. Some 35 members still meet each week and plan to use Harold Davis' gift for their jubilee party in May. Harold now lives in an old people's home in Western Australia.

Welcome

The following Branches elected new members during December and January:

- 4 — North Sussex District
- 3 — Llandrindod Wells (j)
- 2 — Looe (m), Stony Stratford & Wolverton (w)
- 1 — Allox (j), Colwyn Bay (m), Edinburgh Seventy Five (j), Fleet (j), Fleet Photons (j) Group, Hoddesdon (m), Hoddesdon (w), Llanarmon-yn-Ial (m), Nailsea (m), Newbury (w), Newport (IOW) (w), Sale (j), Springfield District, Wallasey (w)

A warm welcome to 25 new members

'Walrus'

If you have a large function you may want to boost your takings by selling ice cream. Groups who have tried this have no problem in finding willing helpers but they usually lack suitable deep freeze refrigeration. This lack rules out 'sale or return' transactions and makes the whole operation difficult and financially risky.

You can, of course, ask for a mobile van salesman to attend. He would probably come for a short time only and you would lose most of your profit opportunity.

To meet these problems (and, of course, to boost their sales!) Wall's have produced a trailable storage and sales unit called WALRUS. It is easily towed by a family car, has brakes, lights, flashers etc and holds up to £300 worth of Wall's Ice Cream. It even has a rain canopy! It is available on free loan. All you pay for is the ice cream actually used, and this is charged out at trade prices.

If your car is insured for private towing, you can collect and return WALRUS yourself — commercial insurance is not required. When you return it, credit is allowed for all unopened packs in good condition and then a bill is made out for settlement.

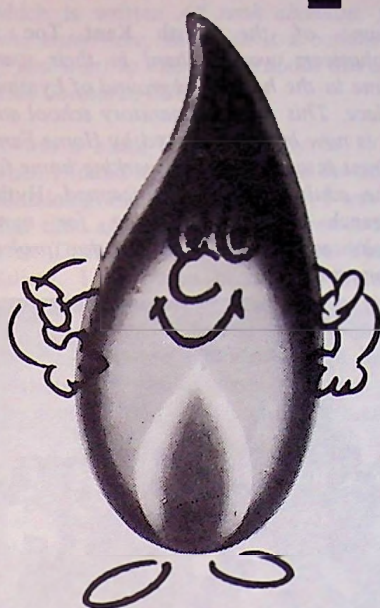
All enquiries, please, to: Steve Napier, Wall's Ice Cream Ltd, Special Event Department, Walls House, Gloucester (Tel No Glos 21521, Extn 2339).



Newport (Gwent) Branches recently raised more than £400 to buy two new medical beds for the Llanhennock

Cheshire Home. This is only a small part of their regular Toc H work (see 'In Brief' on this page).

"Help your clients to the help they need"



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EMGAS

Regional Home Service Adviser,
Emgas, P.O. Box 145,
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SEGAS

Regional Home Service Adviser,
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SOUTHERN GAS

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St. Mary's Road, Southampton,
SO9 7GH. Tel: 0703 824124.

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BRITISH GAS HOME SERVICE DEPARTMENT

The Home Service Adviser,
The Home Economist, British Gas,
Marketing Division,
326 High Holborn, London,
WC1V 7PT. Tel: 01-242 0789.

BRITISH GAS



From the Director

by Ken Prideaux-Brune



*In the lingering half-light of a winter afternoon,
Weighed down by the sagging grey clouds,
Listening to the wind playing a slow, sad sigh
In the leafless branches,
I run my fingers over the cold and clammy earth
And feel – what I cannot yet see –
The hard snout of the first crocus.
And I know
Far down beneath the cold, dead ground
Warm life moves.*

* * *

I write these words at the start of a new year, a year that will obviously be more than usually significant for Toc H. As I tried to suggest in this column last month I believe our prime need is to *listen* as we seek the way forward for the Movement and, more importantly, for ourselves individually. This is not, however, a purely introspective process and there are a number of issues which will need to figure largely in our thinking and our planning.

In this International Year of Disabled People we shall be seeking to extend our work for disabled people, and I hope, seeking ways of involving them much more fully in our activities. In a great many places urgent thought is being given to ways in which we can help the increasing numbers of unemployed people. In the 1930s Toc H made a very significant contribution. Our contribution today will obviously be different but can be equally significant. I have had conversations in the last few days about the 'drop-in' club just being launched in Southampton and about the similar venture in Crawley but there are a great many other initiatives in other parts of the country. I know that the coming year will see new developments in our efforts to make friends with people in other faiths and I'm grateful for the article on

Photo: Folkestone Herald & S Kent Gazette



Some of the North Kent Toc H volunteers worked hard in their spare time in the house and ground of Lympne Place. This was a preparatory school and it is now being converted by Home Farm Trust into a living and working home for the adult mentally handicapped. Hythe Branch are still looking for more volunteers to help this major project forward.



Photo: Jim McAusland Photography

Alloa Branch in the news again! Their Ceilidh didn't make much money but it gave them a splendid evening and brought in many new friends. Among those taking

part were Alloa Fife Band and the Reid Sisters (Scottish Junior Highland Dancing Champions). Dancing was to the music of Mr R Simpson, with his wife as singer.

this subject which appears elsewhere in this issue. Even more crucial, in the view of many people, is the struggle to lift the threat of nuclear destruction. This will obviously be a continuing debate through the year and beyond.

* * *

A particularly happy event which takes place each January is the get-together at All Hallows of ordinands being helped by the Tubby Clayton Fund and by the Toc H and All Hallows Trust. This year more than 30 ordinands were able to respond to our invitation to meet the Trustees of the two Trusts and we were also encouraged to have with us representatives of the various denominational training boards. The number of ordinands being helped is growing steadily and I couldn't help thinking how excited Tubby would have been by such a gathering under the aegis of All Hallows and Toc H. I'm sure that in the long term this developing work will have a very real impact on the spiritual growth of the Movement.

* * *

The flow of paper into the office shows no sign of diminishing. One cannot hope to give more than a quick skim to most of these magazines, reports and information packs. One publication that always seems worth rather more, however, is *Involve*, the magazine of the Volunteer Centre. One paragraph from an article in the current issue on the changing nature of voluntary work in America struck me particularly: *I remember the words of a smiling volunteer who, as we talked, continued to tack up the finger paintings her class of brain-damaged children had just made. 'It's not what you get from volunteer work, or even what you give,' she said, 'It's what you become'.*

* * *

I wonder if I might be allowed to finish this column with another attempted poem as my contribution to the disarmament debate.

*Suppose the world ends with a bang
And then a whimper –
The grey ash of an everlasting sigh.*

'I Remember...'

by Canon A St G Colthurst MA

Those who go to the Old House in Poperinge will notice outside the padre's old room on the first floor a plaque on which is written *All rank abandon, ye who enter here*, and with it a comment *If you want to know more about this ask Alan Colthurst. PBC.*

It was a bleak November day in 1917 when I found myself faced with the door containing that challenging text. I was at that time aged 19, a Staff Officer in the 47th Divisional Artillery in the Ypres Salient. I had been brought to Talbot House by Alexander Paterson, at that time a Lieutenant in the 22nd London Regiment. Before the War he had been working in the Oxford Mission in Bermondsey and such was his influence that he had taken out to France with him a whole company of his lads. After the war he was to become Third Commissioner for Prisons, and one of the founder members of Toc H.* Alec had called for me, as he knew me before the war, and had taken me along to meet Tubby. At that time I was secretly rather pleased with myself, for I sported a clean uniform adorned with shiny riding boots and the red tabs of a Staff Officer.

On arrival Alec tapped at the door which opened to expose a room full of soldiers of every rank, in their shabby khaki and Tubby, in a blue blazer and shorts, holding forth to the assembly. On seeing us he gasped, 'Good Lord, come in'. He seized his hat and stick and threw them under his bed, sat me

down between a Corporal of Signallers and a Tommy, and said 'Now then, talk!' I was not allowed to stay tongue tied for long, but soon found myself a member of this extraordinary gathering in which all ranks retained their distinctive position and yet submerged them in the common fellowship. In other words, 'rank' must learn to be surrendered willingly and not be snatched from one by an unfeeling eagerness in the mistaken idea that class and distinction of quality or difference of character can be forcibly ironed out in attempt to make us all one. The unity of the spirit is a very subtle thing, and can be learnt only by long experience of living together in faith and love, and humility learnt by service. For it is perfectly true that 'they who serve shall reign'.

This was the lesson to be learnt on the first floor of this astonishing house. The ground floor was occupied by a canteen in which people learnt to rub the corners off and get to know each other, and sing a few songs by way of companionship: many people never got further than the ground floor, thinking that jolly companionship was the same as comradeship. The first floor, besides the padre's room, contained a small library, well stocked with carefully selected books for those who wanted to delve a little further into the secret of the mystery. But the inner secret lay in the top floor, for this was the Chapel. The Chapel had been furnished with carpets scrounged from houses, and benches on

which to sit, but the centre of worship was a carpenter's bench which had been found in an old workshop. This was covered by a frontal and altar cloths sent out from home, cross and candlesticks supplied by Tubby's church, and a hanging lamp of unknown origin. It was here that men going up to the front, perhaps to their death, or coming back exhausted (but in either case full of fear and longing for a little faith and courage) found their peace. Under the ministry of the Chaplain they learnt to say their prayers, make their confessions and receive their Communion. As Tubby used to say, it was the tallest building in the town and therefore nearest heaven, exposed as it was to all the shells that might come its way. The strange thing was that it was never hit by enemy action.

One might sum up the whole of the experience of finding God in Toc H as the God of Love by the story of a General and a Tommy kneeling side by side in their chapel. As they go to receive their Communion, the Tommy steps back to allow the General to go first, but the General murmurs, 'Not here, lad, not here'.

* Regular readers will recall that Sir Alexander Paterson MC was one of the inspirers of the first Lowdham Grange Walk (see Point Three April and July 1980) following which the first Open Borstal was set up.

— Editor



Clayton volunteer Dave Marsh gets a wetting during his placement in Utica, NY.

'Uncle' Vic Court surrounded by children at Swindon's Princess Margaret Hospital. Vic — a member of Chiseldon Branch — has been the Hospital's favourite disc jockey for 13 years, never missing a single show. In addition to his broadcasting, Vic spends part of every Sunday and one evening a week visiting sick children.



Photo: Wiltshire Newspapers

The Courage to be Toc

Membership of Toc H has always meant a call to action. But not action as an end in itself. Belief in what Toc H stands for results in action, not because busy-ness is a measure of active membership, but because true belief carries with it a commitment to the obligations imposed by the belief. There can be a casual acquiescence in what people do, or an assent to a statement of belief, what is called 'paying lip service', but real belief implies a willingness to be committed in action. Action then becomes a demonstration of our belief, and a strengthening of that belief. Therefore, our action must always be rooted in a commitment to the values we believe in. For Toc H this must mean the establishment of trust between people who are separated by fear and suspicion. Overcoming mistrust in the Toc H way is by the simple approach of friendship. Simple, in the sense of uncomplicated and not requiring the acquisition of special skills or qualifications. It is not simple in the sense of being easy or of achieving quick results, which is the modern test of a method's efficacy.

The treatment of people as though they were non-persons is perhaps the greatest threat to social stability today. It can take many forms. Political policies which see people only as economic units; social policies which see people as housing units; commercial policies which see people as consumers to be exploited. Any attitude which ignores the human reality behind the statistics. It is an attitude to which we all contribute. We may be responsible for decisions affecting people, in which we completely ignore the human factor. We may accept without protest, even welcome, destruction of a human community in the name of efficiency in order to build a motorway, say, or to make a more efficient industry.

The process is a subtle one, for the issues are never presented as a choice involving people, nor do we think of the issues in this way. They are presented, and we think of them, as abstract problems clearly labelled and identified. Unemployment, Third World, Racial Inequality, Sex Discrimination, Inflation. The list is endless. Moreover, there are people whose job it is to deal with these matters, so we pay our taxes, obey the laws and live our own lives.

Anyway, there is nothing new in this, we say. Some people have always been treated as second class citizens, or worse. So, why get worked up about it now?

The difference is that people who are treated in this way are now more aware of their situation in relation to that of others (they have always been aware of their own situation) and they know that it need not be. Modern communications help them to be aware of the gap between the standard and quality of their lives and that of others, and have also helped them to understand that change is possible. There is a greater determination to effect changes, and they cannot be denied for long. It is this which constitutes the threat to social stability. Depersonalisation is an issue which should concern us all, and especially Toc H members.

From the earliest days it has been the concern of Toc H that everyone should have the opportunity of fully developing as an individual, and of being able 'to think and act with judgement and unselfishness, not only as a neighbour, but as a citizen', to quote Tubby. This concern arose from the recognition of the 'dominating claims of the spiritual factor in human life', (Tubby again).

The spiritual factor in human life requires that the role of Toc H should be found at the personal level. We are not required to solve problems, but to share ourselves with others. This means knowing and understanding other people, and allowing them to know and understand us. This is the basis of friendship, which is the hallmark of Toc H activity at its best.

Friendship is a creative relationship, and because it is creative it must always grow and always be reaching out to bring others within its influence. It is not sentimental. It is not a superficial attitude of doing good which is satisfied with a surface relationship. Friendship is grounded in reality. It is based upon an understanding of why people are as they are, and a refusal either to idolise or to execrate another human being. It recognises the right of people to be themselves, without wanting to possess them so that they follow our will.

The essence of friendship is that it is a relationship between equals. The same people in their work may have a relationship which is anything but equal, and that must remain so. But within their friendship they are free to be themselves, because they trust each other. It is in this atmosphere of trust that people grow as human beings and develop their individual personalities. This growth in understanding between people can make the functional relationship more personal,

even though the roles remain the same. This is an important insight. It enables us to see that the apparent inequalities in work or social roles are related solely to their own context, and do not imply an inequality as persons. We are helped to understand that in every functional relationship, the 'other' is also a person, who is capable of being 'known' as we know our friend. That recognition can begin to introduce a personal note into an impersonal situation. The implications of this for building a society which really cares, are obvious.

Friendship requires us to do the best we can for our friends. We want the best for them - health, jobs, living conditions - and if we can help, we will. This immediate care and concern is necessarily restricted to a small circle. But if our sympathy and active concern stops there, then we betray the trust that has been given us. Our understanding of the creative nature of friendship has to be shared beyond our own group. This is the nature of all spiritual gifts; if it is not shared and allowed to grow, it will atrophy and die. This is what Toc H means by fellowship. It is the quality of friendship experienced within a larger community of persons.

If we take seriously this idea of fellowship being friendship writ large in the community, then we have an obligation to understand the human needs within the community and the ways in which they can be met. There are many factors which prevent some people from realising their full human potential, and if we are to extend to them the same quality of concern which we extend to those we reckon amongst our friends, then we must make the effort to understand their situation, and the social and economic factors which bring that condition about. Providing an 'ambulance service' for social casualties is at times very necessary, and Toc H has provided such a service many times, and often in an imaginative way which has transformed the situation. But such service must not be seen as the required end or aim of Toc H. Fellowship requires more than that.

This obligation to extend our understanding of fellowship requires us to acknowledge the divisions between people in our contemporary society, and for this we should set out quite deliberately to learn and understand the kind of society we live in and the human needs which that society creates. Our

membership of this Movement requires us to think about the social issues of the day, and to work out how our beliefs about the creative nature of friendship can be applied. It is nonsense to talk about thinking fairly if we do not take the trouble to think at all. But let us not fall into the trap of divorcing our thinking from our Toc H activity. Belief implies action in support of that belief, and we have to give as much thought to the application of our beliefs as to the situation we want to influence. We have a great deal of experience in Toc H about the transforming nature of friendship, and we must use this in our consideration of the contemporary situation. We should not think that by continuing to do the jobs we have always done that we are thereby fulfilling our commitment to this Movement.

In emphasising friendship I do not want to distort the unity of the Four Points, but without the whole concept of relationships which is expressed by the word 'friendship', our service can degenerate into social welfare, or our fair thinking into an academic discussion. The Kingdom of God is about the spiritual dimension to life, and that begins with a recognition of the requirements of friendship, as that term is used by Jesus: 'You are my friends, if you do what I command you . . . This I command you, to love one another'.

How our beliefs are to be applied is a matter for local judgement, but it is essential that the action should be thought out in the context of the total human situation. We are required, as Tubby said, to foster an intelligent brotherhood and to think and act with judgement. The social difficulties are enormous, and we should not suppose that we have to act on our own. We can join with other people who are starting from the same base as ourselves, that is from the basis of Christian values. Toc H has insights gained from our experience of mixed groups, and these insights we can share, and persuade others to bring as wide a mixture as possible into their activities. We are not seeking glory for ourselves. We are working to build the Kingdom of God.

The wastage of human potential is evident all round. If Toc H realises its potential as an instrument for change in people's lives, we shall fulfil the hopes and prayers of those who preceded us. Have we the courage to be the Movement that God intended?

CARING ABOUT PEOPLE



Millions of people all over the world are caring for others. They look upon the service they give as an expression of their belief in the value of human beings. They look after the sick, the helpless or the unloved in many different ways.

Many are asking how we can publicise these efforts so that others may be encouraged by their example. Can't we bring together in one place the practical experience of Britain and other countries, so that the world can have access to a Centre which will provide the best knowledge on any specific problem in caring for people?

Under the patronage of Prince Philip, the first International Conference on Human Value will open these and many other questions to all who are interested in helping others. Among the speakers will be Dom Helder Camara Archbishop of Recife, Group Captain Leonard Cheshire VC, founder of Cheshire Homes, Dame Cicely Saunders, founder of St Christopher's Hospice and Dr Alec Dickson, founder of VSO and CSV. The Conference is to take place in the Queen Elizabeth Hall, near Waterloo Bridge, on the South Bank of the Thames on Tuesday 31 March and Wednesday 1 April 1981.

Mother Teresa has sent the following message of support:
Calcutta

. . . The only reason why I can't come to your conference is because of the profession of our young sisters in India and Africa . . . My sisters need my presence as much as I need them.

You know I would gladly do everything to help you to proclaim that every human being is created to love and to be loved.

Do the beautiful work for and with Jesus and all will be well with you and the people who attend the conference.

I will pray much for you and the Human Value Conference . . .

God Bless You.

Teresa M C

The Conference Patron, HRH Prince Philip, who will give the opening and closing addresses to the Conference, has written:

Buckingham Palace

Dr Richard Lamerton's idea of drawing attention to the multitude of services which people do for each other comes at a most opportune time. The growth of materialist philosophies with their bureaucratic attitudes to human problems and the decline of the religious motive for service in recent decades have created a new social situation in many countries of the world. It is time to be reminded that the services which the more fortunate can give to those in trouble or distress must come from the goodness of the heart. We also need to be reminded that services can only be given and received by individual human beings, they cannot be left to impersonal organisations concerned more with statistics than with people.

Like every other social activity, effective service depends on good information and rapid communication. The need for a service first has to be discovered and then someone able and willing to give that service has to be found and the need communicated to them. Goodwill by itself is useless, it has to be given practical expression to be effective.

I believe that the discussions at the International Conference on Human Value will help to disclose needs and to make every aspect of service better understood and consequently that much more valuable.

Philip

Arrangements have been made for Toc H to be officially represented at the Conference but it is, of course, open to all concerned. Generous subsidy has made it possible to keep the booking fee down to £50. Time is short now but they may still have vacancies. All enquiries, please, without delay, to: Karen Gottlieb, Carmelite House, Carmelite Street, London EC4Y 0JA (Tel 01 353 4000/6000, ext 811 or 134).

We will Remember...

We regret to announce the death of the following members-

In October

Evan Arthur (Llandrindod Wells)
Cyril Sharp (Boston)

In November

Lewis Collins (Newsome)
D S 'Don' Mead (Peterborough)

In December

T J 'Tom' Allison (Mablethorpe)
Ethel J Bell (Norwich)
Edward H Bennett (Byfleet)
John Blackstock (Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay)
Martha Hamilton (Edinburgh Seventy Five)
James Henderson (Alloa)
Stanley A E May (Wellington, Somerset)
Thomas Parry (Colwyn Bay)
Bart Perrin (Boston)
Gordon H Rowney (Gloucester)
Bernard V Sansom (Mid-Cotswold District)
George S Smith (Bishop's Castle)
Bernard M Swain (Stockport)
F A 'Frank' Watson (Boston)
Edna M Wilson (Hartlepool)
Christopher N Wooding (South Staffs and Wulfrun District)

In January

A Gordon Bellingham (late of South Western Area General Branch)
Phyllis E Crabtree (Greenbank)
E C 'Eddie' Hill (Alvechurch)
David Hume (Coupar Angus)
R T 'Ron' Reader (Barkingside)
The Venerable Archdeacon B J Townsend (Surrey District)

Canon Norman Motley, Rector of St Michael's Cornhill and part of Toc H for many years died on 11 December 1980.

We hope to print an appreciation of him in our next issue.

William Edward Ramsden, a founder member in 1925 of Scunthorpe Branch, died in December at the age of 86. Apart from his active church life and his career as a respected headmaster, he led a life of public service. For many years he was a County Councillor. He was a past Wimbledon chairman and past President of the Junior Lawn Tennis Association. Above all, he carried the true Toc H spirit with him wherever he went and right to the end.

Scores of Norfolk stockmen who have used the lounge at the Royal Norfolk Show over the years will miss the friendly face and cheerful greeting of Ethel Bell who died in November at the age of 76. Ethel and her husband Bill had been active Toc H workers at the Show since 1954. They started their Toc H lives in Aylesbury before the war; later they were founder members of Beccles Men's and Women's Branches; in 1954 they moved to Norwich and became heavily involved there. Ethel — and indeed the whole of Norwich Women's Branch — showed particular concern for work with the Blind.

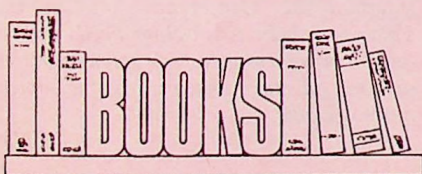
Charles Edward ('Eddy') Hill, a founder member of Alvechurch (Birmingham) Men's Branch died in January. Always one of his Branch's most enthusiastic members, Eddy held most offices during his service besides serving more than once as Central Councillor for the South Worcestershire constituency.

An old friend writes to tell us of the death in December of Bertha Ellen ('Nellie') Cooper. Nellie had a

magnificent record of Toc H service going back to LWH days, including (with her husband Len) the founding of the old Sneyd Green (Staffs) Branch. Her greatest achievement was the setting up and running, through the war and afterwards, of a fine Services Club and Hostel at Stoke on Trent. This met a great need in the area but it took months of frustrating effort to translate the idea into action. When it opened, Nellie became its first and only manager, caterer and hostess, besides sharing the work of room cleaning, bed making and the serving of endless meals. Gradually she built up a small army of women volunteers but she herself was always on the spot. At her funeral service in Poole, Toc H President Revd Ken Bloxham paid a warm tribute to this remarkable woman.

All who knew Bernard Sansom were deeply shocked to learn of his sudden death on Boxing Day. Bernard had been a keen member of Toc H for 41 years, originally in Somerset, and more recently in Stroud. For a time he had to take a back seat owing to illness, but he began to be more involved again about four years ago. He was a member of the Mid-Cotswold District Branch, and held District office. In 1979 he was elected Councillor for the Mid-Cotswold and Gloucester constituency, and he brought to that task the same mixture of conscientious hard work and humour that typified all he did in Toc H. His regular visits to Branches were always awaited with eager anticipation, as members knew he would give them full value. During 1980 he was persuaded to let his name go forward as a candidate for the Central Executive Committee and, although unsuccessful in the election itself, he was co-opted to the Committee. Just three weeks before his death he attended the weekend meeting of the CEC at Alison House where, in his quiet and unassuming way, he made a real and valued contribution.

It is impossible to assess the loss



Because They Asked by Olive Kendon

Published by The Children's House Society. £3.65.

This is Olive Kendon's own account of how she came to found the first Children's House — a house belonging to and run by children with support from sympathetic, loving adults. It was opened in 1941 because children she came across fighting on wasteland asked her for a Sunday School.

There follows a gentle yet passionate account of how the first house came into being, its subsequent effect on the children who used it and on the community to which they belonged. Olive Kendon's own faith is kept in the background; all the time, it is the children's own initiative which is harnessed and fed to become a power to benefit themselves and others around them in practical and spiritual ways. Her continuing weakness of health is similarly kept in the background; it is her iron determination and living spirit which guide the enterprise rather than physical or financial will. It is this which makes the account so remarkable in these days of state provision and local authority grants. Indeed Miss Kendon felt that

Councils would do well to consult and allow participation of their tenants and children, since it was from the merging of adult and junior wills in running the Children's House that harmony and creation began.

Although working with children in dire need, Miss Kendon felt that the new poverty (of the 1940s onwards) was not material, but spiritual — negative barriers set up by years of inconsistent handling, so that children grew up mistrusting authority. Therefore she set out to love them in the belief that by beginning with compassionate relationships, a brave new world could be built which would spread like a fire by sending out sparks. Her own brand of love was a mixture of commitment, self denial and

that his death means to Toc H, and his leadership and friendship will be keenly missed. Our deepest sympathy goes to his wife, Ann, and their two children.

Bakewell Branch writes to tell us of the death of one of their members and a past Chairman, Ernest Rouse — 'a great spirit and real worker for friendship'. They report also the death of two former members, Walter Senior and John Hartley.

Early in the New Year a tragic fire in Poperinge was responsible for the deaths of Frieda Boedts, her husband and daughter. Frieda was well known to visitors to Poperinge because she so ably assisted Johan Martin in the work of providing help and information for visitors at the Town Hall. She was a member of the Belgian 'Friends of the Old House' and one of the happy party to visit London for the 1980 Festival. We join our friends in Poperinge in mourning the sad passing of three so young. At the funeral on 8 January, some 2,300 people assisted in the service.

Morecambe Branch report the death on 9 December of Jim Hayton at the age of 83. He met Tubby at the Old House in Poperinge during WWI. During his 23 years of service in Morecambe, Jim became known to and loved by patients and staff in local hospitals: they will all sadly miss the many things he did for them.

Jimmy Henderson (Alloa Branch) died in December, aged 74. He had more than his share of illness and personal problems but came through them all undaunted. First in Jedburgh, then in Alloa, Jimmy became a respected and much loved friend whose advice was often sought and always gladly given. He was active in his Branch until a few weeks before his death.

We give thanks for their lives

a combination of firmness with wisdom and compassion, but even more important (in that it should be seen to come first) was fairness — Justice before Mercy. This had been the basis of the children's plea for a House of their own: it was not fair that they should be left out in the cold, physically or spiritually, and it was the basis on which they ran the House. In order to be fair to everyone in the House, they had to learn to organise and co-operate with each other and this meant acceptance of restraint in communal behaviour — learning courtesy as a basis for harmonious living. 'Because They Asked' is Olive Kendon's personal account of how the children learnt courtesy.

Anne Richardson

Small is Beautiful

Ordinary people — not the big organisations — can change our industrial society. They can change it for the better — out of all recognition, by doing things on a human scale.

This was the view put forward by John Davis, who has had wide experience of both 'big' and 'small' sides of industry. He is now chairman of the Intermediate Technology Group.

Addressing the 1979 Central Council, he told how local organisations like Toc H can encourage the growth of small firms, which can:

- * reduce imports
 - * create new jobs
 - * halve energy consumption
 - * use money and resources better
 - * end the 'throwaway philosophy
 - * cut wasteful distribution
 - * produce new ideas
 - * bring people together
 - * creatively, developing confidence, a spirit of enterprise and community feeling.
- Said Mr Davis: The wealth of a

community is in its people... efforts to find mechanical solutions to apparent problems will never work — it is only insofar as the spirit of people and the spirit of communities is built up, so that they are enabled to tackle their own problems, that there will be any real solution.

With increasing unemployment, dwindling resources and rising energy prices, Mr Davis' thoughts are becoming increasingly important. We have produced a good quality C60 cassette of his address, price £1.00.

Please complete the form below.

Please send me the John Davis cassette. I enclose a cheque/postal order for £1.00, made out to Toc H.

Name

Address



For the past two years, Wroughton (Wilts) Women's Branch have run a very successful 'friendship circle', attracting some 20 people to each weekly gathering,

and making many new friends. The picture was taken at the circle's second birthday party at which 36 members and friends shared in the celebration.



Some 80 youngsters aged 8-11 joined a Clitheroe (Lancs) party in January. They

were all children who had taken part in last summer's Toc H playscheme.

Photo: Clitheroe Advertiser & Times

Open Forum

Disarmament

In the letter from Rowland G Clegg (January issue) he challenges me and L C Burnham and those who think like us to answer the question: 'Can you imagine Jesus ordering the manufacture of . . . nuclear weapons?'

My answer is 'No, I cannot'.

We all long for all nuclear weapons and all weapons of mass destruction of all kinds to be internationally outlawed, also for very considerable limitation of conventional weapons by agreed stages.

Rowland G Clegg mentions our Lord's rebuke to Peter, 'Put up again thy sword into its place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword'. To which I add the Lord's saying: 'My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight'. However, these sayings cannot be interpreted as a condemnation of the right of a State to fight in self defence. The first saying asserts — what history confirms — that aggression finds its just retribution in the end. The second teaches that it is unlawful to attempt to spread Christianity by means of force, and not only unlawful but futile; and this again history confirms.

If people and nations paid heed to the laws of God, wars would be no more. In that sense war is always wrong. On this point all Christians, pacifist and non-pacifist agree. However, the mind of Christendom has undoubtedly held that it may sometimes be the lesser of two evils — an important moral principle.

Also Christianity has always insisted that war should be restricted and humanised — hence the importance of the Geneva Convention. There are some commands which the Christian soldier should refuse to obey if they are the kind of acts censured by international law. The very idea of international law owes much to the influence of Christianity.

Unfortunately, human nature being sinful, it would seem as if soldiers will be needed for a very long time.

May I say 'thank you' to Keith Rea for his splendid article 'Arms and The Future' (Guest Editorial, January) especially for putting the alternatives in the matter so clearly. I am sure he is right in saying 'We should seek less simplistic answers to this terrible question than 'better dead than red' or 'better red than dead'. Also that it is important that progress is made towards completing SALT treaties'.

Personally I quite often envy those who are out and out pacifists. They

find the rest of us exasperating, lukewarm Christians and very difficult. I trust they will do their best to be patient with us.

Revd G Kestell-Cornish
Baristaple

As a casualty of the first World War, I am naturally in favour of peace and disarmament. But as a realist I do not expect this dream to come true.

In the first place advocates of disarmament start with the assumption that armaments make war. They don't. Men make war, as they have done from the beginning of time. The known history of the world is of successive wars and aggression. Consider the conquests of the Israelites. They had no tanks or nuclear bombs. War making is unhappily a part of human nature. Nature provides that all things exist by aggression. All animal life depends on the strong consuming the weak.

Therefore for our ideals to prevail we must transform human nature. How?

Even the limitation of arms is an impossible dream. Abolish nuclear arms and conventional weapons are more valuable. Get rid of war planes and civil planes are still available. If cannon go small arms are so much more important. If all arms are banned sticks and stones and even fists are readily available.

Observation of the antics of the UN clearly indicates that universal agreement to disarmament, or anything else, is measurably unlikely.

Unilateral disarmament is but an invitation to the aggressor. Leave the door unbolted and the thief walks in. We have therefore simply to hope that the mere cost of maintaining deterrents will possibly force all nations to disarm.

L C Duncan
Southampton

It is right that Toc H members should be interested in this subject, though, as a Movement, Toc H cannot take sides...

I see no sign that the time has come when 'the wolf will lie down with the lamb'. It is a time to be hoped for, and worked for, but if anybody went to Whipsnade Zoo and put a lamb in with the wolves, we would expect the results to be disastrous for the lamb...

If the people in the richer countries, of which Great Britain is still one, were much more concerned with the welfare of poorer peoples, and could make sure that they had regular meals and a share of the necessities of life (and some of the 'luxuries', too) perhaps the wolves in our world would not feel it

necessary to maintain subject peoples in puppet states.

Hitler's invasion of Russia was very nearly disastrously successful, and well within the memory of her rather elderly leaders. Could we persuade them that we have no aggressive intentions? Or is it that the poor organisation of their economy makes it important to them to keep before their own people the capitalist bogeyman, whose threatening presence demands and justifies a sacrifice in living standards?

I feel that in time most people can be won over, but we should not expect to achieve it without great and sincere effort. Demonstrations and polls will not do it!

Yes, Christ did rebuke Peter for using the sword when he did. Yet he obviously appreciated the disciplined character of the Centurion, and one must suppose found nothing to condemn in the cohorts who enforced the *Pax Romana* over a considerable area of the known world. No American President boasts that he wants to kill or order the killing of 70 million Russians: he only warns that it is in everybody's interest that the peace should be kept. I am sure Jimmy Carter felt that way, and Ronald Reagan in his Inauguration Address made the same point.

I can admire the conscientious objector of 1939, but, had enough of us held this view, many more people would have been forced into the gas chambers. Yet many Germans now can hardly believe that the concentration camps happened, and perhaps Fred Pitfield-Bailey (January issue) does not believe in the existence of Russian Labour Camps now, or believe that Polish upper and middle classes were exterminated during the war, to make the Russian take over of Poland easier... Those who have never lived under a dictatorship find it difficult to realise how the 'man in the street' has to conform, and how ruthless the Party, whether of the Left or Right, Iron Curtain or South American, can be...

'Unilateral' disarmament means 'one sided'. We should lay the foundations of friendship, probably at considerable cost to our own comfort, before we lower our guard. We have to show the professors of other faiths, religious and political, that our Christian faith is the answer to all mankind's needs. Then national and international forces will become protectors of peace, and ready in time of disaster to bring efficient, disciplined and quick aid where needed. Christ was a friend of the Centurion, Tubby was the friend of many

Opinions expressed in these columns (including any editorial comment) are those of the contributor and not necessarily those of the Toc H Movement. We reserve the right to edit letters. Only letters carrying the correspondent's full name and address will be considered for publication.

soldiers in the Old House. Who can doubt that soldiers, sailors, airmen, would rather be engaged on constructive humane tasks than in military adventures for glory? There is no doubt how we want to pay our rent for our room on earth. If it takes sacrifices on our part to convince others we are sincere, are we ready? Signing petitions won't be enough...

I find it unhelpful to be asked whether or not Jesus would have ordered the manufacture of nuclear weapons. He was a carpenter by trade who became a local Preacher. What convinces us of his Divine Inspiration is that what he said did not apply to any time, but to all time. He made no pronouncements on political matters, on the cruel capital punishment of crucifixion, or other themes such as so often exercise reformers. But he gave us the ground rules to observe if we want to become the Father's children. Unfortunately, most of us think we are already grown-ups! But facile solutions will have to give way to tough solutions. The world's peoples are divided by deep and dangerous rivers of misunderstanding and ill will, and if we want to extend the hand of friendship, we shall have to risk getting our feet wet... Members of Toc H, in common with all Christians, are committed to thinking it will work, and mankind, listening to God, can do it...

L C Burnham
Enfield, Middlesex

High barriers exist across the world and no doubt many would die fighting for their freedom as they see it. But let me give some hope to those who despair. I do not believe that the Capitalist West will ever go to war with the Communist East, however much they huff and puff. Both have the freedom to eat four square meals a day — a freedom denied to the Third World. So that is where the real danger lies. The people of the Third World countries (like the Chinese millions) won't care what kind of government they have if only they can be better fed. The unfed Third World presents the greatest danger of war and the real challenge to both Christian and Communist nations. The sooner we lay down our arms and concern ourselves with the real problem, the better our chances.

Fred Pitfield-Bailey
Bideford

We can all help!

Last year I was involved in a road accident and broke my right arm, since

when I have had some appreciation of the problems of the disabled, as the broken arm has never recovered full range of movement.

The article in your December issue tells us of many things that Toc H members can do during IYDP, but unless we are less selfish we shall end the year with more disabled than we started with.

I expect that Torquay is fairly typical of many towns and as a pedestrian I find that there are many unnecessary hazards facing the elderly and disabled. Pavements already broken up by illegal parking of cars are liberally fouled by dog excreta. Cyclists, roller skaters and skateboarders turn the pavements into private race tracks. Motorists and 'bikers' drive through the town after dark with no regard to speed limit or noise level. Now that the police no longer patrol the streets on foot, the law breaker has free range, so that elderly people feel unable to leave the house after dark. Dangerous litter, bottles, tins and half eaten take away meals thrown on the pavement are another hazard. All this could be changed to the benefit of all, by less selfishness and by setting a personal example.

I realise that those responsible for our administration rarely if ever have any need to walk: if they did perhaps they might take a more lively interest in the safety of ordinary people. There are direction signs erected by the Torbay Corporation which are below the safety limits. If you want to test the degree of official inertia, try to get a dumped car removed from the street.

Perhaps life has become far too comfortable for many of those who attend Church and for the clergy, who may have lost touch with the problems of those who must get around in all weathers without transport...

F G Read
Torquay

I was reminded recently of an experience of a friend of mine, ex-Sgt Ron Ainsbury — a 1939-45 POW. In Stalag VIIIB at Lambsdorf, after the Dieppe Raid, some French Canadians were brought in as POWs. They were in a dreadful state, hungry, very wet and badly knocked about. Ron, who had been a POW from Dunkirk days, says that they had formed a Toc H Group in the camp and when they saw the state of the Canadians toured the camp collecting gifts of Red Cross food and dumping them into blankets. The problem was then to get the food to the Canadians who were in a separate compound. When the midday

soup was issued, it was always carried in dustbins, two men to a bin, into the compound and issued to the POWs. So, the tinned food and cigarettes were taken out of the blankets, tipped into dustbins and carried by 'phoney carriers' into the Canadian compound. As Ron said, he and his friend thought they had done their Toc H good deed for the day.

G W Cowley
Huddersfield

It's all in the mind!

Last Christmas Eve I went with the friends I was staying with to Mass in the Catholic Church in the centre of Swansea.

Nothing surprising in that you may think, but I had been to schools where the Catholics were absent from any assemblies or religious instruction classes. I had been led to believe that they held strange rites completely different to my Methodist upbringing or Anglican services.

Paul and Chris, newly married Toc H volunteers, had invited me to spend Christmas with them and part of the plan was this service. They welcomed me and I found the whole time in the Church almost overwhelming in its simple worship. Folk singing with an unusual orchestra which included a xylophone, readings and a full eucharist with clouds of incense (making the priest choke and comment that this was as dangerous as smoking), made these hours full. A large church packed with people of all ages singing, praying, laughing together in worship.

Another barrier broken down for me through Toc H.

Gill Westwood
Mid-Glamorgan

Toc H Diaries

I am writing just to say well done to Toc H on their new style 1981 diaries: and they are still under £1! They include a lot of useful information, and are well worth every penny. I hope every Toc H member will take note and go and buy this very good bargain.

Amanda Dudman
Merseyside

Note: Thank you, Amanda. We hope to be able to sell 1982 diaries without any price increase: but it is a struggle! Meanwhile we have a few 'remainder' 1981 diaries at the much reduced price of 40p.

Editor

Photo: Southend Evening Echo



Scenes at the 25th annual Toc H carol service held in the Shoebury Garrison Church of St Peter and Paul. Among the distinguished guests were three local MPs, the Lord Lieutenant of Essex, Southend's Mayor and Mayoress, the Army's Chaplain General and the Toc H Director.

Photo: Post Echo Ltd, Hemel Hempstead



Harpenden (Joint) Branch visit their local old people's home regularly with some form of entertainment. Each Christmas they give a party there for the 36 residents with a short service, carols and a concert. This year, the party, helped on by the Chix accordion group, hit such a high note that residents were still singing its praises weeks later. The Chix accordion group comes from Luton and its members are all under ten years old.

Alison Bird ('Miss Sevenoaks') draws the winning ticket in the Sevenoaks Toc H Christmas Draw. With her is Branch Chairman Peter Ridd. The proceeds provided about one third of the estimated £1,500 required to mount Sevenoaks' major 1981 project - an adventure holiday for deprived children.

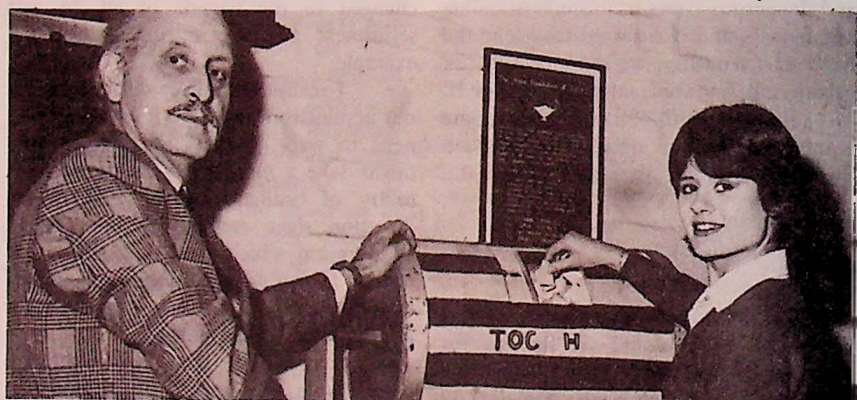


Photo: Sevenoaks Chronicle

A New Record!

Norwich's Toftwood Male Voice Choir have produced a stereo LP record with the title 'Christ Liveth in Me'. They aim to raise funds by selling 1,000 of these records. Every penny raised from sales will go to three local charities: Toc H Holidays for the Disabled, The Continuing Care Unit of Colman Road Hospital and Toftwood Methodist Church. The record includes:

God's Choir

*O Love That Will Not Let Me Go
I shall Know Him*

(soloist Colin Horne)

Nearer My God To Thee

Christ Liveth In Me

Consecration Hymn

A Robe Of White

Priceless Treasure

*When I Survey The Wondrous
Cross
How Great Thou Art
The Comrades' Song Of Hope*

The Toftwood Male Voice Choir was formed in 1969 and with Toc H and the Methodist Church working together in harmony they have raised considerable sums over the years. Their joint aims are to 'spread God's good news in song' and to help local charities.

Why not buy one of these records and help them to reach their target? Just write (enclosing £3.00 plus 50p p & p) to: Vic White, 654 Dereham Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR5 0SZ. Vic is Norfolk's postal service rep and you can rely on him to get your record to you promptly!



Oliver Sutton, Loughborough Joint Branch added the role of Santa Claus to his wide ranging Toc H work - mainly devoted to the elderly and the disabled. Oliver is the leading light of the Charwood Entertainers, well known for their many concerts in the area.

Inter-Faith Dialogue - a way of life

by John Bowers

I have spent most of my life abroad, much of it with the United Nations, working in many countries and with people of many religions, so to me inter-faith dialogue, as you call it in Toc H, is a way of life. Let me try then to give you a personal history of how and why other religions have helped to strengthen and deepen my own.

At the age of 23 I went to work in the government service of the Sudan. My cook and his cousin, who for seven years cared for my domestic welfare, were both pious Muslims. They used to invite me on occasions to the special devotions of their 'way', at which a group of 20 or so worshippers would spend the night intoning the name of God in a rhythmical dance - a far cry from evensong at my parish church, but not less spiritual.

As I learnt more Arabic I discovered that the three letter root s-l-m, which forms the words 'muslim' 'Islam' and 'salaam', has the double meaning of 'peace' and 'surrender', signifying that inner peace is to be obtained by surrender to the will of God. Of course this is no easier or more complete among Muslims than among Christians, but in my own case it was in a contemplative group, inspired by an

Indonesian muslim 'teacher', that I discovered the extraordinary experience of spiritual 'surrender' and through it the deeper meaning of 'the Power of the Holy Spirit', the 'Comforter', the 'peace of God' that transcends mental activity, the worshipping in 'spirit and in truth' and many other phrases long familiar to me at a verbal level from the Gospels.

I learnt too that Christians do not have a monopoly of the love and charity which Jesus so perfectly taught and displayed. The Good Samaritan was not a Jew nor a Christian. Nor were the illiterate Sudanese Muslims who were my fellow soldiers in the Ethiopian campaign of World War II, but, when I collapsed with malaria and dysentery, they constructed a stretcher from branches, carried me on their shoulders 40 miles out of reach of the enemy, laid me in a cool dry river bed, shot guinea fowl for soup to keep me alive and sent one of their number 200 miles on horseback to fetch a doctor. How much easier to have left me to die or be captured.

In the 1950s, working for the United Nations in southern India, I was able to study Hindu philosophy with its central concept of Karma. This again added a

new dimension to my understanding of the Christian gospels. I was also privileged to witness the magical power of religious devotion which enabled barefoot worshippers in a fire walking ceremony to carry the great silver image of their God through a ten foot pit of red hot embers and then on up the stony path of their temple.

Later I apprenticed myself to a local school of yoga. After a month of preparation - no alcohol, no smoking, no meat - my guru was ready to teach me the basic practices of yoga, and the control of body and mind. He gave me a vital sense of the body as an instrument of the spirit and the religious duty of keeping it in health. Pranayama - the relationship of controlled breathing with vital force - gave me a means of healing myself and others from the tensions and 'dis-eases' and of releasing the mind from thoughts and fears, fantasies and vain imaginings. I found too that Pranayama made a very special contribution to the practice of Christian prayer.

So I would say to Toc H - yes, pursue your inter-faith dialogue but let us not stop at dialogue - discussing our differences across an unbridged gap. Let us work together with the sincere followers of other faiths, without the arrogance of a chosen people, in the practice of 'true religion and virtue'. How would I define religion? In this context, I suggest: 'The pursuit of truth and reality beyond the boundaries of science and dogma'.

(To be continued)

Community House in Nottingham

by Sue Cumming

From the very beginning of time Toc H has been involved in houses of one kind or another, from the original Talbot House, through a score or more of Marks and Centres, to the present interest in smaller Community Houses. We are not alone in our exploration into aspects of living in Community, and the Mid-Eastern Region has just formalised its commitment to setting up a Community House in the All Saints parish in Nottingham, in co-operation with the local vicar, Revd Paul Watts, and the PCC.

All Saints is an inner city parish, very near the centre of Nottingham. It is part of the Development Area, and much of its old housing is being replaced or renovated. By 1982 its population of about 6,000 will include over 500 new families, ie getting on for half the population will be newcomers. Thus a whole new community will be in its infancy. There is a Residents' Association which is already working hard to provide new facilities and resources and create ways in which people can come together. The church, too, is deeply committed to

the development of this area and is working closely with the other agencies. Nevertheless this is an area which will continue to have many problems for some time to come - high unemployment, a large proportion of unskilled people, a multi-racial population, etc.

The potential role of a Toc H Community House in such a situation hardly needs to be spelled out. The house will have its own rule of life, which will express a commitment to the neighbourhood, the local churches, and to the residents themselves, and which will be based on the fundamental principles of Toc H. The six people who come to live in the house will work out how they can best live together as a family, in the context of the wider community of which they will be an integral part. Inevitably this life style and experience will affect each individual who becomes part of the Community, for however long or short a period they are there, giving them insights into pressures and problems in society and their causes, the positive and creative potentials in any community,

and a new insight into their own needs, gifts and spiritual journey.

We are very excited about the prospects, especially as we shall have a Long Term Volunteer living and working in the house, developing its life both inside and outside, and being involved in the life of the parish. This will be a new expression of Toc H in the City of Nottingham, and while being closely connected with the local church, it will provide a natural and important meeting place for people of any faith, or of none.

If you are coming to live in Nottingham in the near future, and are looking for accommodation, and find these ideas interesting, do get in touch.

The PCC also needs some financial help in making the house it has bought habitable - maybe you would like to buy us a radiator or a roll of wallpaper, or are changing your cutlery or crockery or lounge suite? . . . If so, we'd be interested!

Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland



We are continuing our series of statements of the aims and objects of the major Service Organisations with this piece about **Rotary International**. Other organisations covered so far are: **WRVS** (June 1980), **Inner Wheel** and **Ladies' Circle** (October 1980) and **Lions Clubs International** (February 1981).

Editor

Rotary Today

Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland (GB & I) includes clubs in England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and the Republic of Ireland. There are nearly 1,400 clubs in the area with more than 59,000 members. They share with more than 18,800 Rotary clubs in some 150 lands the Rotary motto *Service Above Self*.

Rotary History

The first Rotary club was formed in Chicago, Illinois, USA in 1905. Rotary crossed the Atlantic in 1911, with the formation of the Rotary Club of Dublin, Ireland, followed in the same year by the Belfast, Ireland club. Rotary clubs in London, England, and Edinburgh and Glasgow, Scotland, appeared in 1912.

The Rotary clubs in Great Britain and Ireland organised themselves in 1913-14, into the British Association of Rotary Clubs and later, in 1922, the Administrative territorial unit known as Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland (RIBI).

Rotary's Purpose

Rotary's purpose is to serve others through efforts to improve the community, to promote high ethical standards in all vocations and to advance international understanding and good will.

Rotary in Action

Each Rotary club determines its own projects and activities to meet local circumstances and needs. Groups of clubs may co-sponsor a project at regional or, occasionally, national levels. Internationally, clubs in one country may join

clubs in another land on various projects as well as support and participate in the programme of The Rotary Foundation. In addition, Rotarians are urged to be active as individuals in social service and civic activities of their own choosing.

Examples of Rotary Projects and Activities

Rotary has many programmes **benefiting the handicapped**. Service to the blind has always been a major interest. Rotary clubs in Great Britain and Ireland have funded 'eye camps' in India in co-operation with the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind through which 100,000 Indian villagers have had their sight restored. Many clubs produced 'talking newspapers'. Others provide guide dogs (and volunteers to train them) for the blind. The clubs, in 1980, also organised the largest sports event for the visually handicapped ever held in Great Britain and Ireland. Many Rotary clubs in the British Isles research and publish guides for the handicapped in large towns and cities, showing where special facilities are available for them. Others participate in international exchange programmes of disabled persons.

In Rotary **Vocational Service**, many clubs and districts have conducted surveys and seminars to investigate the causes of vandalism, illiteracy and unemployment. Trying to solve unemployment among school leavers is a major part of the club programmes.

Health Care for people of all ages remains a feature of Rotary work in RIBI, ranging from special outings and sponsoring holiday homes for the disabled to the provision of expensive and specialised

equipment for hospitals. The Rotarians of Reigate, for example, have undertaken the financing and training of a complete coronary care emergency ambulance unit.

Youth are served by Rotary clubs throughout the region. The Irvine Rotary club in Scotland works to discourage vandalism by encouraging constructive after-school activities. Londonderry, Northern Ireland, Rotarians built a special playground for youth in their community. Regional Rotary clubs sponsor more than 1,000 international youth exchanges and tours annually. In addition, more than 560 Interact and Rotaract clubs for young people dedicated to community and international service are sponsored by Rotary clubs in GB & I.

Rotarians in Great Britain and Ireland have contributed more than £1.15 million (US \$2.5 million) to **The Rotary Foundation** which will spend more than £46 million (US \$100 million) during 1980-85 on its own programmes to further international understanding. For 1980-81, the Foundation has awarded more than 1,000 scholarships enabling students to study in countries other than their own. Some 31 Rotary Scholars are from Great Britain and Ireland and 187 scholars from around the world will be studying in universities in GB & I. Under the Foundation's Group Study Exchange programme, teams of five non-Rotarian business and professional men travel abroad to study the social, economic and cultural conditions of their host countries. Two matched Rotary districts each send and receive a team during alternate years. In 1979-81, 22 teams will journey to and from GB & I.

Small Ads

Small advertisements must be received (with remittance) five weeks before publication day, which is the 23rd of the preceding month. The charge is 3p a word (minimum 30p) to Point Three Magazine. Rates of display advertisements can be obtained from the Editorial Office, Toc H, 1 Forest Close, Wendover. Telephone: 0296 623911.

Raise funds quickly, easily. Superb ball-pens, combs, key fobs, diaries, etc gold stamped to your requirements. Details: Northern Novelties, Bradford BD1 3HE.

Weymouth - Bed, breakfast and evening meal. Winter weekend breaks £13.50. Weeks from £40. Open all year including Christmas. Bar, free parking, reductions children and small coach parties. Mrs Cole, Kirtleton House, 21 Kirtleton Avenue, Weymouth. Telephone: 0305 785296.



Bruges, Belgium. Hotel Jacobs, (established 50 years) welcomes Toc H parties and individual visitors to this lovely old city within easy reach of other famous cities of art, and of the coast. Comfortable, modernised hotel. Quiet situation. Parking. English spoken. Strongly recommended. Bed and breakfast only. Mr Jules Lietaert, Hotel Jacobs, Baliestraat 1, Bruges, 8000. Telephone: 010-32-50 3398 31/32.

Member's seaside cottage, self catering holidays anytime (especially reasonable early/late season). 134 Fore Street, Newlyn, Penzance. (0736 4479).

Conwy, dinner and B & B. Weekends, mid-week bookings, ideal for walking, touring, near sea and mountains. Terms £48 per week. Doreen and Bill Baxter, Llys Gwilym Guest House, 3 Mountain Road, Cadnant Park, Conwy, N Wales. Telephone: 049 263 2351.

Folkestone, The Adams Family offer you that comfort and service you deserve for your holiday. Comfortable rooms fully centrally heated, good home cooking and good fellowship, we're Toc H members of course. Groups, retreats, seminars, parties of 10 or more at special rates. Brochure and terms on request. Bright & Lil Adams, Claremont Private Hotel, Claremont Road, Folkestone, Kent. Tel. Folkestone (0303) 54897.

For Hire, self catering wood/asbestos construction chalet at Bolingey, nr Perranporth, Cornwall. One mile from beach. Two bedrooms, kitchen, lounge, bathroom, main water and drainage. Sleeps seven. Not five star. Fortnightly bookings preferred. Details on receipt of sac to: F E Whybra, Heartis, Copper Hill, Troon, Camborne, Cornwall TW14 9JW.

Christian Fellowship Contacts. Marriage Introduction. Singles holidays/houseparties. Local Group events. Nationwide. Christian Friendship Fellowship, Dept B/23B, Edenthorpe, Doncaster. Sincere males especially welcome.